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Whimsical Rimes

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From Painting Louis Hels Made for WHIMSICAL RIMES

All dim gray-blue, it shoulders through—
The Island of my Dream.

Whimsical Rimes

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no 1

FIRST BOOKLET

FORE

Sing of the birth of planets;
  Dream of eternal skies.
Measure the newer story
  Of life's tremendous rise.

Speak of mind and its visions;
  Tell of an upward grope.
Sing, too, the older story
  Of love and loss and hope.

ASPIRATION

Over the dark, thin nebular drift,
Waiting the warmth and light;
Over the writhing, blazing sun,
And planets, half day, half night;
Comets that race with a trail of fire,
Asteroids whirling along—
Something is brooding, impelling;
Something that cannot be wrong.

Up from the unseen germ and cell,
Potent with glory unborn;
Up from the fish of the Devon sea,
And saurians feeding at morn;
Jungle glooms where the lion lurks,
And dark-eyed cavegirl's song—
Something is moving, compelling;
Something that cannot do wrong.

Out of our little joy and pain,
    Hope and love's warm breath;
Out of mazes and mysteries,
    War, disease, and death;
Care for self and love of friends,
    Will to be kind, yet strong—
Something is striving, excelling;
    Something that cannot go wrong.

ASCENSION

AGE BY AGE the sun is rising
Toward the apex of its way;
Seeking heights where Vega sparkles,
Many trillion miles away.

So the soul of man is climbing;
Wistful ever, mortals wind
Farther from the brute and caveman,
Dawn and morning of the mind.
Into dust fall kings and idols,
Superstition, ancient gear,
For the strength of thought is stronger
Than the curb of hope or fear.
Man is breaking vain traditions,
Old injustice, legal wrong;
Giving outworn good for better,
While he thinks and toils along,
Quelling plagues, controlling nature—
Losing zest for martial fame—

Winning on this little planet
Glory for the human name.

Smiling upward, sweeping onward,
Through the night and through the day,
Mounts the soul of man still higher
Toward the apex of its way.

BEYOND DEATH

HEART, be at ease; she could not die.
I know she lives and waits for me!
Perhaps beyond the summer sky
Where never telescope can see.
But be it near, or be it far,
She loves her own from some kind star.

She lives, because the worlds of space
Refuse to part from one so fair.
They love, as I, her smile of dawn,
Her sunny eyes, and evening hair.
She waits for me! O soul, not sad,
When all the moons and stars are glad.

IMMORTALITY

(Oriental Song of 3500 A. D.)

TEN THOUSAND years must dawn and die
Ere I can bid my soul good-bye.
God of the East, unbind the man
Whom you can free, or no one can.

The stars begin to draw apart,
A million times the sun has set,
Unnumbered dreams have stirred my heart,
Delights have come and joys have fled,
And all I loved and served are dead,
Yet I, who sinned, am living yet.

When life was new, when love was sweet,
I craved a curse—"Oh yield to me
A bliss that for others may not be meet;
Enlightened One, though your Way be best,
Give me the boon of the buoyant West,
The blessed gift, Immortality."

I knelt beneath the Burma palms
And scanned your face, Eternal Peace,
Till your still lips moved in the awful calms—
"Ten thousand years will dawn and die
Ere you can tell Desire good-bye.
I have granted this—and at last release."

Oh many an age has lapsed since then,
And I, in my zest for joy and fame,
Have fought and wrought with a maze of men;
Have lolled in gain and moaned in loss
Where the leadlight drops from the Southern Cross
And oft where the Dipper and Sirius flame.

My name has sounded around the earth—
A king in the West, a prince in the East—
And the tribes I bled still sing my worth.
I drew my hosts over snowy land
And broke their will on torrid sand,
For I was the lord of great and least.

A thousand tender eyes of home
Have shone with joy or wept in rue.
Mine was the love of Greece and Rome,
Egyptian smiles, Circassian charms,
The Houris' faith, and South Sea arms.
A thousand cared whose hearts were true.

But dearest names grew dim and strange
Till memories died, while the ages bent
My temper and aim through change on change.
So much that was I is beyond recall
That my soul is barely mine at all,
For new mind came as the old mind went.

One thing endured and haunted me,
A painful thing that would not die—
Under the stars, by land and sea,
In Aden, Samarkand, and Brest,
At Zanzibar, and Bucharest—
The old, sad thought that I was I.

And now, dear Buddha, dispel my woe
As weary and gray to you I creep,
For I begged for that I did not know.
Unbounded life is not the best,
And we need far more eternal rest;
When the glad day glooms, it is sweet to sleep.

Let not ten thousand years drift by
Ere I can bid Desire good-bye.
God of the East, grant now release
And melt my soul in immortal peace.

SECRETS NEVER TOLD

How did you mingle your atoms,
Forming the primitive cell,
Oxygen, Hydrogen, Carbon,
How did you manage so well?
Whence came the wonderful essence,
Life of the ages to be?
Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Sulphur,
Whisper your secret to me.

Brought from the wreck of a planet,
After a keenly cold ride
Found life at last resurrection
Out of a meteor's side?
Or driven by light through the ether,
Woke it to thrive on the earth?
Chromatin, Protoplasm,
Tell me the truth of your birth.

Perhaps on the globe life was hiding,
Scattered in rock and in air;
Braving the heat of the hollows
Long ere the ocean was there;
Waiting for cycles the moment
To gather itself and be born.
Water, you mother of being,
Sing of the soul at its morn.

THUS SPOKE OLD OCEAN

Older am I than life or death
And older far than mammal or man.
I sang ere lilt of bird began
And whispered to earth ere beast drew breath.
For I am the sea, the shining sea,
Which evermore unfettered will be.

I speak—can you hear?—when great waves crash
On folded strata or granite wall;
The story of earth I chant to all
As my breakers thud and swish and splash.
With sigh or roar, I sing it o'er
As they crest and foam along the shore.

Eons ago (but who knows when?)
My spirit lived in a heated cloud
That wrapped the world like a heavy shroud—
The world that was newly crusted then.
My chemical soul and mist of coal
Conferred for an age where storm-clouds roll.

I heard the call of the lonely land,
But Land was selfish and cried, "Away!"
When his anger cooled and let me stay,
I sprang in joy from strand to strand.
So out of steam and a gloomy dream
I changed to the rippled ocean stream.

The earth I loved, and I loved the sky.
To these I said, "A better must be
Than earth or air or the dimpled sea.
Let life be born, but born to die.
Our skill to test, present your best,
With a wealth of energy impressed."

Of all the elements we could find
We gathered nine, but chiefly six,
For the compound we essayed to mix.
Centuries passed ere I could bind
The pulses rife that make up life—
Ere concord grew from a primal strife.

Millennia went, yet the wonder-thing
Was only a speck, a film, a cell.
Yes, half the ages arose and fell
Before this essence I could bring
From alga and germ, through swimming worm,
To the backboned fish with silver derm.

Out of the water, cradle of all,
Plant and animal climbed at last
And over the silent, bare land passed.
Vast forests throve with fern-trees tall,
For mist of coal into green life stole
And found in the carbon beds its goal.

Stolid and drear, life struggled long.
No flower smiled, no bee was heard,
And all the world had never a bird,
For love lacked beauty and love lacked song.
The dragon-fly beat dreamily by
Or drowsily sank on moss to lie.

Soon animal tribes by thousands died,
And deserts ousted shade and rain,
Till we feared our work was work in vain.
Yet greater marvels at length were tried.
Giants in frame, the dinosaurs came,
Whose wee brains lost in the awful game.

The hope of hopes was a mammal droll.
How small and stupid the creature seemed!
But deep in its beady eyes there gleamed
A glint of reason, a spark of soul,
Which wavered long, but flamed out strong
When man emerged with his right and wrong.

O changeful, splendid, terrible Life,
Shall I call you good, dear soul, or ill?
You like to pity and like to kill
And your love of self is love of strife.
Yet the radiant plan we trust to man;
Unless he conquers, no other can.

LOVE

WHO loves another cannot fail or die.
His soul, atune with music of the spheres,
Transcends in worth and need the ended years.
He must prevail, though all things else go by!
The moon is bound to earth with during tie
Of love, by which the universe coheres,
And many a comet, sweeping far, yet veers
Back to its sun, while stars lack power to fly
From stars they draw. Ask not for wealth or fame,
The butterflies and humming-birds of fate,
Because these slighter things must flutter by.
Only Love will wait and be the same
Beyond the silence of the final gate,
For those who love can neither fail nor die.

WHEN HEARTS REMEMBER HOME

ETERNITY is calling
    Above the zigzag trail
That climbs the furrowed mountain wall,
    High over brook and dale.
My child, if you are weary;
    My life, if you are sad,
Look far, far up to cloudless blue
    And let your heart be glad.

When darkness fills the valley,
    And slopes and peaks are dim,
Infinity comes whispering
    Above the mountain rim.
My child, if you are tired
    Of earth, of toil or play,
Glance up and see the Universe,
    Aglow with endless day.

SPEEDING

We are dashing along in our snug, wee car,
Of granite and iron and gold,
At eighteen miles a second
Through autumn, summer, and cold.
Five hundred eighty million miles
Each year we dart around
An unmarked track, as in gilt and black
Earth wheels without a sound.

Our automobile is part of a train
That moves at the slower pace
Of a dozen miles a second
In an interstellar race.
A huge and splendid machine is guide;
It lights the burnished band,
Saturn and Mars and six other cars,
To the sweeps of Lyra-land.

PLANET NEPTUNE TO MOTHER SUN

Mother of Worlds, you shine afar
With the feeble light of an evening star;
Your smile is faint as I glimpse your face
Across the millions of miles of space.

Can you recall that destined day
When I left your arms and sped away
To spin my life in the lonely wide?—
Alone till a child moved by my side.

Smaller you grew and dimmer yet
As eons dawned and millennia set,
Till you lived for midgets, Mars and Earth,
Older than I, but younger in birth.

Ages of ages have passed since then,
And time must die ere we meet again,
Yet I send my longing across the night
To dust of my dust and light of my light.

CAVEGIRL'S SONG

AROUND the woods old lion creeps
With bitter eyes against the dark,
And fur-bear thuds about the brook
Or tears upon the trees his mark.
Yet Babba dear, you never fear,
But coo within your bed of bark,
For she to whom you cling is near.

Ah, something lurks beyond the fires
That glint the awful cave of night,
And hides within the stillest glooms
Till birdsong and the waking light.
My Babba dear, I droop with fear
And wonder can this loss be right.
I feel so much to me unclear.

For something took our own, the Strong;
So many sleeps he stays away.
He brings no more the food he found
In shining thickets day by day.
O Babba dear, each lonely tear
Your tiny fingers strike away,
But he is never, never here.

OUR FUGITIVE

Love may return at twilight;
It may delay till dawn;
But though it wait its own dear date,
We know it has not gone.

It fades in street and market,
Alarmed by whir and throng.
From glare of day it droops away;
It fails—but not for long.

In hours of dusk and silence
The soul regains its best;
Enchantments bind both heart and mind
As Love wings home to rest.

THOSE WHO CONQUERED EARTH

The tribes went east, the tribes fared west,
And clans moved south and north,
Away from groves where the race had birth;
From tropical Asia forth,
By dell and fen, the hosts of men
Roved on to rule the earth.

And those that trod the wide southwest
Were trapped by a sultry sun,
Where bosky Congo and Niger wind
Or foaming torrents run.
And minds asleep in langor deep
For centuries lolled behind.

The folk that roamed a vast northeast,
Where the giant Yangtze streams,
Discovered wisdom, beauty, gold
Of Oriental dreams.
Then blessed the past and bound them fast
To the cumbrous things of old.

In a far northwest the sturdy clans
That ranged from Po to Clyde
Revered the ancient Middle Sea,
Yet weighed its work and cried,
"More we will know and higher go!"
So they thought the whole world free.

But out where islands lift their peaks
Above the coral bays,
The southeast rovers paddled round
In scented summer days.
Oh what is thought? It never has brought
The beautiful world they found.

COURAGE, COMRADE

In ways that now we cannot know,
Beyond our doubt and pain,
The happiness we need will come,
For dreams are not in vain.

Yet though the last dear hope should die,
Believe that you will find
A new ideal to heal the heart
And raise and lead the mind.

Then strong! for much has courage won.
If help arrives too late,
Oh see that ill is half in thought
And only half in fate.

HER WONDERFUL WORLD

I LOVE you, World: your April skies
With clouds that drift in mountain blue;
    The greening hills and flowered lawns;
    Your sunset dreams and Eden dawns;
The ocean waves, in foam dispersed—
    I care for you, dear Earth, far more
    Than ever I have cared before;
I love because she loved you first.

I love you, Life: the afterdark
With spectral hills in evening mist;
    Enduring stars that guard above
    The city's lights of home and love;
And silver roads that moonglow gives—
    I cleave to you, dear Life, far more
    Than ever I have clung before;
I love you, Life, because she lives.

DESTINY

It gives us love and it grants us woe,
But it does not care and it does not know.
It rules with kind and with cruel laws:
O'erspreads the hills with sunset gauze,
Purple or blue to herald night,
Though gray or pink in the morning light;
It touches the sea with sky-joy blue
And plants its sheen in the roses' dew;
Lifts the trees from earth's cold crust
And blows its pansies from granite dust;
Cools the poppies with ocean mist,
But dulls their gold if so it list.
It grants us ups and doles us downs;
Prepares with smiles, or sends with frowns,
Wonderful days and beautiful hours,
Or pain and tears, storms and showers.
It draws us high to dash us low,
For it does not care and it does not know.

It gave me life, a glorious chance.
Now may it glow with sunshine glance;
Bend for me and be wondrous kind
To let me live in heart and mind—
Live to the full, yes joy and be!
If this it will yield but once to me,
Then, if it must, it may break my heart
And tear the gift and my grip apart;
Humble and wreck and lay me dead
Under the snows on the mountain shed.

And what I ask I beg for all.
Oh let them live, though they climb to fall!

MAY DAY

THE ORIOLE sings at morning,
And mocking-birds lilt at night,
But within my heart is a music
That mellows dark and light.

Forget-me-nots gleam in valleys,
And poppies in mountain dew,
Yet within my mind is a garden
That blooms the whole world through.

Venus perfects the evening,
And Jupiter flames all night,
But within my soul is a splendor
That glows unfading-bright.

Flower and bird and planet
To all in the world are true,
But the heaven within my heart
Swings wide its gates for you.

THIS FOR ME

Of all the planets that circle the sun,
Your world is the fairest that ever spun.

Among the countries that cover earth,
I count as best your land of birth.

Though thousands of cities within it hide,
I like that best where you abide.

And of all the souls in its varied host,
I find you dearest and love you most.

JOY COMES AT MORNING

GLEAMS a star trail on the ocean,
Then a moon path down the bay,
While a solitary spirit
Thinks of one who went away.
Birds o' night are singing softly
From the eucalyptus trees,
And the drowsy palms, awaking,
Fan the orange-scented breeze.
While the surf is sighing, dying,
By the silent, lonely cliff,
Some one far up in the moonlight
Sadly muses, wonders if—
If the Love so far away
Comes again and comes to stay.

Morning stars, so long asparkle,
Pale and fail, for day is born.
Feathered folk by thousands carol
Ecstasies to honor morn,
And the flowers, red and purple,
Lift a welcome to the sun.

Then around the harbor headland
Gilded masts through morning run.
Like a dream the ship encircles
Spirit dearer than the dawn,
While the ocean-scented breezes
Stir her hair and scarf of lawn.
For the Love from far away
Has returned—returned to stay!

LOVE'S VENTURE

One light, one shadow; one gain and loss;
One dream for the years to be;
One faith to bind, one love to bless;
One hope unfurled in spring's caress,
To sail where time and chance possess
The Everlasting Sea.

IDAHO

YOUR miles of grain and seas of sage
Above the lava dust dip from sight.
They reach from river banks gnarled with age
To shattered slope or timbered height;
They thrive by the Snake as it winds and falls,
Or cling to life on the northern walls.

At night there arches across the land
A Milky Way more wide and bright;
The constellations are keen and grand,
And planets gleam with richer light.
For the stars smile down with a kinder glow
Where Heaven leans over Idaho.

FEW ARE CHOSEN

Few can be happy, few prevail;
The many must smile at dreams,
As on through shadowed lanes they press
To sink in delusion's gleams.
For only a few can part the trove
Of power or truth or fame,
And only the few can life endue
With a deathless love or name.

O Few who are happy, Few who love,
Do you know the debt you owe
To souls that failed, to hearts that lost?—
O Few, you never will know
That the love which wooed you out of dust
You won through others' loss;
That power or gain is the gift of pain,
While thousands bear the cross.

SHINING ONES

Beloved Stars, above the way
I wind through hope and care,
Shine on, smile on, howe'er I stray!
Though far I go, no matter where,
I find your benediction there,
O kindly, constant Stars.

When friends and loved ones fail or die,
When skill and hope have set,
Remain, O souls of evening sky!
Though strength forsake, though men forget,
A few, I know, will pity yet
Among the constant Stars.

Arcturus, Deneb, mild Altair,
Mars and Aldebaran,
Who nod and flash in midnight air,
I hail and love you every one,
With Vega, jolly giant sun,
My own among the Stars.

No loss, no wrong, of mine can bend
From me one gracious ray.
Your light will glow until the end,
For all things dear may drift away,
And you alone of all can stay,
O Stars, beloved Stars.

FORSAKEN

LIFE of the pulsing Universe,
Power in star, in rock and tree,
Why do you smite the Brothers Men?
Be merciful to them—and me.

Strength of the tidal wave that stills
The cry ten thousand mortals moan,
Look! you pause at your ancient work;
Pity, pity us, your own.

Breath from long-lulled, waking hills
Wraps our cities in scorching blight;
Storms rend and wreck the nests of love;
Disease strikes dead from nooks in night.

Still you wait, asmile in flowers
Lining the lane of tears and wrong.
Hunger rules, form feeds on form—
Life of the Universe, how long?

THIS LITTLE LIFE

Across unending spaces, and down the whirl of time,
The stuff called I has sifted, to reach a pantomime—
To gleam as heart and reason a brief, delusive season;
To think, to will, to love, to ponder human lore;
To strain, to flare or falter, like myriad millions more.

Yet from this swirl of time, and through a vast, void sea,
The stuff called I must filter and never more can be
The same old focused yearning, with hope and purpose burning;
With wisps of recollection and surge of love and hate—
This strange agglomeration of biologic fate.

And you of dawn and twilight, Eternity's gift to me—
A hope and inspiration, music and reverie—
To sleep and change are tending, the farewell and the ending.
Your mind must lose its luster and from your eyes the light
Will flicker into shadow and melt in cosmic night.

So down the cold, hushed ages, past or yet to be,
I fling my aspiration through all Infinity,
To seek ere dusk a meaning, some new diviner gleaning,
To satisfy a heart that still too sadly knows
That you and I may dwindle to butterfly or rose.

GOOD-BYE

I ASK no more, kind Mother of us all,
As in the darkened silences that grow
Beyond the farther rim of life, I fall,
Rejoicing that I lived. Content, I go;
One golden comradeship was more than all,
And though the good I longed for could not be,
You gave this dear devotion, and to know
She cared . . . for me.

NIGHT

THE twilight falls; the dear, clear day at last is done.
I offer thanks to Him who sent the kindly sun.
Although my heart is shaken and cannot understand
Why He would end a day so radiant and rare,
I bow as Dark descends and gently wrests from me
The hours, so greatly loved, which nevermore can be.

END OF FIRST BOOKLET

SECOND BOOKLET

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FORE

"Good verse rimes,"
Boss Matthews thought.
"Free lines fetter
Charm," he taught.

"Tabloid work
Is much preferred,"
MacAlarney.
"Write a word."

DREAMS

BEYOND the dark and ruffled sea,
Which breezes crest with foam;
Beyond the rising tidal stream,
Where sails and circling seagulls gleam,
All dim gray-blue, it shoulders through—
The Island of my Dream.

Out there at dawn a purple veil
Slips down the mountain slope,
To tint a nook where poppies teem,
And in that paradise I seem
To see her wait, caressed by Fate—
The Lovegirl of my Dream.

Yet all the years sweep sadly by.
I cannot cross the sea,
But on the cliff that braves the stream
I stay perplexed, nor catch a beam
Of faith to take and will to make
The Future of my Dream.

ALONE

I OFTEN think how lonely the Lord of Life must be,
Who made the pneumococcus and poured the starry sea;
Who built a brontosaurus and locked its bones in earth
Ere anthropoid or human had Cenozoic birth.

How lonely, how forsaken, the God of Suns must be,
With neither wife nor comrade to share Eternity!
His home quintillions measure, but every else too small,
For suns themselves are motes that dust the Empty All.

I sometimes think how sated the King of Kings must be,
Whose microscopic vision records Infinity—
The toils and wars of trillions, while hunger, love, and hope
Unreel the old, old dramas through which the midges grope.

CONSOLATRIX

TAKE me, dear Death, in your arms.
I have tried so hard in vain,
But the hopes of my heart life cannot impart—
You must smooth away this pain;
You must lock me fast where hope is passed,
Released from my own disdain.

Fold me, kind Death, in your calm.
I am tired of toil and play,
And I long to rest, like a child, on your breast
In the dusk of a tangled day.
Yes, I long to sleep in a slumber deep,
Untroubled forever and aye.

STARS

OUT through space my spirit leaps,
Swifter far than light;
Up to the lunar craters,
Gilded, banked with night;
Over the channeled, ruddy Mars,
Up through Saturn's rings;
Parting the hair of comets,
On my spirit wings;
Out where vast and awful voids
Space the Milky Way—
Room for earths by hundreds
To spin the night and day;
Straight through stuff of orbs unborn,
Mammoth nebulæ;
Lost where stars by thousands
Light the Ether Sea;
Far in timeless, bournless space
Till systems cease to roll;

Ever vainly seeking
Hope and the Supersoul.
Millions die who never knew
Half I see and ken
While I circle madly
Through the stars. And then—

Back to earth my spirit falls,
Tired of cosmic dust;
Needing a human being,
Human love and trust;
Gliding down on fancy's wings
Deep among the hills,
Where the elms and maples
Arch the flowered rills;
Back to dark-haired Mirabel
All my being flies;
Back to a wide-arm welcome
And the cosmos of her eyes.

REBIRTH

It was here that your ashes were laid, my dear;
That we scattered your dust in the dew,
Where we planted the rose that enchantingly grows
To fashion your graces anew.

Your glories still gladden the earth, my child;
Your smile is a quaint perfume;
These velvety tips were the gentlest of lips,
And your cheeks engendered this bloom.

Again you appear, but are many, my child,
And at last one brightens for me,
Who loved you so long, with a loyalty strong,
And hoped for what never could be.

DREAM-STUFF

"A girl in whom a man is interested is more of a dream than a real person."

THE girl you see—oh no, not she,
But the girl astir in your heart
Is the woman you love and exalt above
The stir of street and mart.
For the really so in lass or beau
Is hardly half that seems
When a strange control upwings the soul
To days that are webbed in dreams.

For buried deep in the mental keep
Is the love of a million years—
The pulse and mark of dawn and dark
With a myriad smiles and tears.
And a hundred tales of hills and dales
That were or might have been,
The dreams of art, have molded part
Of the love that lurks within.

REST

I LIKE the sea, but I long to be
Where ruddy wild strawberries grow;
Where fragrant forget-me-nots border the rills,
And maples and clover blooms nod in the hills,
In quiet green hills that I know.

For it seems to me 'twould be lulling to be
Where the dead found a rest long ago;
Where memories sleep in the stones o'er each bed,
And lilies look tenderly down at the dead,
In quiet green hills that I know.

SUPERSTAR

Alpha of Orion, mammoth of the sky,
Dropping gold at evening, sparkling red and high;
Blinking light at billions,
Vast as suns by millions;
Far among the stars and rich in latent worth—
Greetings from a solar atom, wrinkled little earth!

Airy in your substance, hardly there at all,
You are moving madly—heed some secret call.
Woven in your glories,
Doze uncounted stories.
Life and hope and death, with love and loss and tears,
Sleep within your vapors, wait the throbbing years.

ADVENTURE

Our life is strife, a brief and rude adventure,
A war of will and clash of hearts,
And hope is half our bliss—a dream of joy,
Which Time so grudgingly imparts.

The game is old, for years have gone by millions
Since living things first yearned and vied;
Since dots of hunger jostled round the food
That floated through the Algonkian tide.

Our restless globe has raced its circled journey
For eons since the ape-like men
Within a Java jungle snapped and clawed
For Beauty, fruit, or leafy den.

Three myriad years ago contending cavemen
Struck death from flakes of ragged stone.
The lake-hut peoples warred. Assyrian kings
On rivals' corpses raised a throne.

Xerxes' and Alexander's deadly marches,
The Cæsars' sword and Omar's flame,
A Corsican, a Kaiser—all were part
Of earth's kaleidoscopic game.

Millions of years! yet men and nations grapple.
So sad to lose, yet grand to win!
A glint of gain to fight for thrills the world,
Which drowsy, dreary else had been.

DAWN AND HOPE

LIGHT, light, the morning light—
Many a ray leading the day
Into all parts.

Hope, hope, recurrent hope—
Bringing us cheer, conquering fear,
Raising our hearts.

PARTING

FAREWELL, for the shadowed hours incline,
And day's delights so soon are gone.
I leave you, dear; your love resign.
Farewell—till a brighter day shall dawn.

SHADOWS

Overtones of "Take Me Back to Babyland,"
F. J. Tannehill, Jr.

TAKE me back where Elsa smiles,
And let me linger there;
Cheer me with the pensive charm
Of shadow eyes and hair;
Let her sing again or be
Sweet with whimsies fanned—
Take me back beside the hearth,
Deep in Memoryland.

FUTURE

After the dreams and yearning,
Beyond the storm-cloud, too,
What for me will the future be,
And what for you?

Where will Florene be singing,
And who will arrest her smile?
Whose joy will last when mine has passed,
After a while?

Who will charm her forever?
Ah, would that I knew how!
Man of the earth, esteem her worth
As I do now.

THESE THINGS MUST BE

I CANNOT HELP that snows are white,
That skies of June are blue,
Nor yet that stars shine all night long—
No more can you, no more can you.

The Bengal tiger's teeth are sharp,
And ships go down at sea;
No footfall cheers the lonely moon—
These things must be, these things must be.

THUS PASSES GLORY

My MASTER has rendered a message of fate
In words that gloom like a knell,
And my way winds out through the mountain gate
To droop where the lost souls dwell.
For the fairy-formed hours are all at end,
And hope so shattered no magic can mend—
Too soon I must bid you farewell.

Through fair paths we wandered; no more we shall roam,
For Fate is supreme from appeal.
I must leave you serene in your mountain-locked home,
To wait for the ill and the weal.
For my way lengthens on under rain-laden skies
And no more will run where your mountains arise—
I have lost you forever, Camille.

REMORSE

In the ember glow I sit alone
At the twilight hour of life,
And muse of a day ere I stole away
To dwell in a world of strife.
I think of a hope forever gone,
Of joy that died in the din,
And dream of the love that once I loved
And the glory that might have been.

I stand anew on a grassy knoll
In the Springland of Romance,
And my soul is stirred by a love-fraught word
And the power of a tender glance.
The distant dell, where soft clouds drift,
And the future seem akin,
As again we plan for the years to come—
For the glory that never has been.

WANHOPE

THROUGH all the long, dim ages
That were or ever will be,
The bliss that we seek we saw not
And never forever shall see.

Fair dreams we have dreamed, dear comrades,
But our rose-girt hopes have fled;
Oh many an early promise
That wakened our wills is dead.

The good we labored to gather,
The joy that was almost won,
Lie out of our life forever,
And our clouded day is done.

We were whims of a myriad chances,
The entangled strands of cause,
Which gave us a full, deep yearning
And broke us with pitiless laws.

But who can forbid us to fancy
We yet shall stand in the light
That shines for the favored of Nature?
Hope on till the fall of night!

Let us dream till Dark, the consoler,
Comes gently to lull us to rest;
To wrap us up snug for eons
In a care-free slumber nest.

SUNDERED

I HAVE missed you, dearest being,
In the winding ways of earth.
At each turning, dimly yearning,
I have found but days of dearth;
Never learning or discerning
Where you linger, Soul of Worth.

When I brood o'er past and future,
Soon to you my thoughts incline.
In my dreaming, lost in seeming,
I am sure your hopes entwine
One still deeming love is streaming
From your heart to comfort mine.

Though I know that all my journey
Fortune's blight will darken through,
I am trying, vainly spying,
For the face I never knew.
And in dying, death defying,
All my heart will go to you.

HELPMEET

Pretty eyes and tresses
Capture easy men.
Dupes that wed for beauty
Seldom smile again.

Woman takes the ducats,
Woman grips the sous;
Finery and comforts
Why should she refuse?

Giving teas and dinners,
Much she helps her spouse.
Prizes won at parties
Decorate the house.

Judges show him mercy;
Still there's gold to pay—
Alimony driblets
Till the Judgment Day.

VANITY

Roses lose their pink and white,
Clinging vines too soon untwine;
Day's dear light goes out in night,
Stars at last refuse to shine.

Is there, then, no faithful wight?
Yes, a creature sweetly true;
Woman bright as dawning light,
Constant-during . . . like the dew.

THOUGHTS AND WISHES

When the sky is blue, I think of you,
Of a woman gowned in gentle blue.
Through the sunset pink, of you I think,
Of a girl enrobed in darling pink.
When the moon shines fair on night like your hair,
I wish you were here—no, I'm glad you are there!

MELODY IN M

Music of her voice,
Magic of her eye,
Mystery of her presence
Make me sad—and why?

Much though I adore,
More than she can see,
Merry-minded maiden
Merely mocks at me.

ENVY

If I were Miss Florena's muff,
I'd be exceeding bold,
For e'en by day, on every way,
Two precious hands I'd hold.

If I might be Florena's muff,
Though other joys depart,
Enough for me that I could be
So very near her heart.

If I were just Florena's muff,
She'd like me much—she would;
Each soft caress, would then address
To me—ah, if she could!

ELFIN LAMENT

SWEET lady with the dark brown eyes,
With hair where night in slumber lies,
With ready smile and witching ways
That web the hearts of men and fays;
The shadows' pride, whom sunshine grew;
Enchantress, yet a kindness too—
Oh why, oh why, do you dart away
From hedge and lawn where the fairies play?

Sometimes at dusk your footfall light
Bestirs the pulse of bearded spright
And thrills the heart of this elfin king—
My heart leaps like a wounded thing.
Then forth I spring with happy cry
To welcome one who scurries by.
Aye, fast and faster follow you;
Distressed and breathless, call, "Halloo!

O lassie, come with fairies play
And frolic o'er the lawn till day."
But heedless (Sweet, you do not know),
With flying feet clear home you go;
You slam the door on hoary beard
And leave me with the dark you feared.

Then up to your window straight I leap
And flat my nose on the pane and peep.
A hopeless darkness rules awhile;
The light comes on, I see you smile.
You smile with a smile not meant for me—
Oh would that dark brown eyes could see
The sad little heart that loves you so,
With changeless love that fairies show.

So, faint and grieved, I drop to earth
And slow wend back to sport and mirth—
To mirth I joy in ne'er again
Till, Queen of Fays, you crown my train.

TO LIVE IS TO SIN

BY SPITFIRE, KITTEN

I LICKED my paws
And sharped my claws;
Then purred, "Beware, my tasteful mouse,"
Ere I danced away
In the failing day
Through a spacious printing house.

And as I went
With greedy bent,
I stilled my heart as good men do.
"'Tis not unkind
For me to find
A mellow mouse or two.

"'Cause not for self
Or dainty pelf
I soon shall lick my velvet jaws;
To help poor man
The best I can,
I munch on mousy paws."

So round the base
Of many a case
Where printers toiled my bright eyes went.
With purpose ripe
Past linotype
I dashed—and found the scent.

Then through the door
And over the floor
Of the editorial room I flew.
In that hall of fame
I clawed my game
While the scribes roared, " 'Rah for you!"

The girl-cub cried
When this she spied,
"O naughty Spitfire, come not here
With angry mind
And all unkind—
You shall not hurt the dear!"

That mouse was scared,
So ill he fared.
"Let's arbitrate," he gently whined.
I took my fill.
"I gladly will,
But wait till I have dined."

EUGENICS? WHY NOT?

"If the afflicted member of your direct ancestral line was as far removed as a great-grandparent, and if you have at least three brothers and sisters, all normally resistant, you may assume that the taint has been eradicated."

"WED my daughter? Never, sir!
Parent love will shelter her."
Father thundered till he shook,
Scattering ice along his look.

Vanished all the suitor's bliss.
"What, ne'er taste your weedy kiss?
Tell me, man, what crime I've done
That I cannot be your son."

"Ancestors is your offense,
All of whom had taint immense!"
Fiercely Dolly's dad replied,
"For once at least they all have died!

"Dare you seek a sweet girl's hand?
Worse remains; I understand,
Scion tinctured through and through,
Some had cholera morbus, too."

Grief prolonged the suitor's face.
"Nature marked me for disgrace . . .
Break my heart . . . I shall be missed . . .
To death and calm I go unkissed."

DIVIDED DUTY

"Mother, I have torn my trousers—
Ripped them on a naughty nail.
Will you patch them while I slumber?
Please, please, mend them without fail."

"Sonny, mother cannot help you;
Wait until to-morrow night.
Mrs. Mancurst all this evening
Talks on 'Feebleness of Might.'"

"Wife, my six suspender buttons,
One by one, have slipped away;
How shall I sustain my garments?
Surely you will sew to-day."

"Husband, I am grieved to tell you
You must use a safety pin;
Dear, the canvass keeps me busy—
Woman's pet reforms must win.

"When I shall have done my duty,
Gladly I will sew and sweep;
Yes, and while the contest wavers,
O'er your troubles I will weep."

DRIFTWOOD

Column for St. Valentine's Day

HERE'S to the little God of Love,
Who plays us tricks we know not of,
And sends us with an easy shove
To toil through life for just a dove.

* * * *

Little heart, Cupid's dart
Set you wildly throbbing.
Much the pain, all in vain;
Soon you fell a-sobbing.
Luckless wight, what a spite!
Life was meant for smiling.
Cupid's naughty, Venus haughty—
Futile all reviling.

* * * *

The youth was based upon his knees;
His upbent quaking arms implored,
While vibrant voice enhanced his pleas
To one through many months adored.

"Oh wilt thou be my loving spouse?
One word can flood my heart with light."
The answer fell from upper house—
"'Tis half past ten; bid John good night."

* * * *

"Though your father hate me,
Though your mother rate me,
What care I
For angry eye,
If my Susan mate me?"

"William, you're a queer one;
Would I could say 'dear one.'
What were I
Were Dad not by,
Coinfully to cheer one?"

* * * *

"How I like you," William sighed.
"Make it love," the lass replied.
"I must then put out an 'i'."
"Love is blind, no ill to spy."
"Where shall 'k' go? tell me, Miss."
"Let me take it in a kiss."

LULLABY

(Songs like this will be sung in nurseries of 2000 A. D.)

HUSH, little nebula,
Don't you cry;
You'll be a blue star
By and by.

Color will alter—
Gold, red, and black,
One after other,
Will garnish your back.

Kiddies called planets
Will spring from your side.
Curling and whirling
World-stuff will ride

Round a vast circle,
Performing a year;
Heat must go etherward,
Cool lands appear.

Life soon will follow—
Amœba and worm;
Dinosaur, mammoth,
And Brain for a term.

Warring and slaying,
Fighting for mates,
Brain must live stories
Of loves and of hates.

Wisdom will triumph,
War lords must die,
Happiness triple,
For Brain can go high.

* * * *

Planet on planet,
Will crash—but don't sigh;
Again you'll be nebula
By and by.

TOO MUCH HISTORY

May, 1915

HAVE done with the rattle and rumble of war!
Away with hate of the foe!
Let your childish racial dreams dissolve,
Entente and alliance go.
Bid the brotherhood of nations rise
And world-wide concord grow.
O Teuton, Celt, and Slav, obey the higher call;
Forsake the long-drawn trenches and let the standards fall,
For the Lord still loves the nations, one Power upholds them all.

Let the Crescent light the Eastern sky,
And the Cross make bright the West;
Bid the sword of the Prophet rage no more,
And the steel of the Christian rest;
Let the long crusade forever end,
For only love is best.
O blinded Turk and Frank, obey the higher call;
Forsake the hateful turmoil and let the ensigns fall,
For Allah loves the races, one Power sustains them all.

GAME

I CELEBRATE the hollow skull,
For years the home of What's-His-Name?
To this small house great joys repaired
And cutting sorrows came.

I cannot praise the rugged cheeks
Or gloomy nooks where eyes have been,
But must commend the mouth that still
Is brave enough to grin.

LIONHEART

At Harbor Ease my ship bode long,
Lapped in a mirror bay,
Where sunshine fell on mast and deck
And lured my soul to stay.

But I bade the peaceful port farewell,
To steer my ship toward gain;
I fixed my hope on golden goals
That lie beyond the main.

And now a storm uphurls the sea;
Waves roar against my bark,
The wild winds madly flap the sails,
And night leads on the dark.

Yet hero blood shall fill these veins,
A lionheart control;
No churlish fear can master me
While purpose steels my soul.

So on I go through calm or storm,
Whiche'er the world may don;
As long as sails can hold the wind,
I will make the ship speed on!

"Could we forsake
Our gods and take
The Christ as more
Than Tiw or Thor?"
King Edwin's word
His councilors heard.
While elders sighed,
Thus thane replied:
"Out of the darkness, out of the storm,
To cross a feast hall, cheery and warm,
A sparrow wings; revives in the light,
And then flies back into snow and night.
Oh such, dear liege, is the life of man;
He joys and strives but a little span;
From gloom to gloom moves like a bird.
If Christ mean more, accept His Word."
As Faith increased,
A gray high priest
Denounced the gods
As dream-born rods;
Though called insane,
Rode steed to fane;
Cast lance at wall,
Placed torch to all.
While Woden flamed,
A seer proclaimed:
"O'er lea and land
A Cross shall stand,
Shall light and lead
Northumberland."

LAST SONG

SUNLIGHT dances down the trail
Gently bending toward to-morrow;
Luring me to leave the twilight
Locked in hills of sorrow.
Home at last beyond the mountains!
Were you missed of yore?
I shall miss you so again
Never, never more.

Love denied, your charms are dust—
Laughing eyes with fringe of night,
Lips that curve to sink in dimples,
Cheeks of rosy white,
Shadow hair with furls to fetter—
Were you prized of yore?
I shall love you so again
Never, never more.

ETERNITY

ALONE among the stars I sit and dream
Of those vast reaches of Infinity
That conquer thought, where universes gleam
Like golden islands in the Ether Sea.

My spirit gropes within an awful night
Through which no traveled starbeam ever runs—
A nebula that now drinks heat and light;
That yet will shine and burgeon into suns.

I watch a primal fire-mist knot and burn
To form the great Arcturus, or behold
Two dark orbs, blindly clashing, flame and turn
To stellar dust whence newer orbs unfold.

Oh what are humankind and this our life
Compared with those star-clouds beyond our sky?
What mean success, defeat, the patient strife
To make a better world? And what am I?

One germ among a billion and a half
That haunt a microscopic land and sea
Within the radiance of a puny sun,
Lost in the mazes of Eternity.

FINALE

So THIS is the end. The hour so long postponed
Has come, and Death is calling at my door.
Perhaps my Dark Friend wills that I should go
To save me from some lurking future woe.
But if for well or if for ill,
'Tis useless to implore,
For I must bid the World and Time
Good-bye for evermore.

A moment, Death. But give me pause to think.
This ever-flowered dale that I adore;
The blue that nestles in the Evening's arms
Far up the hills, secure from human harms;
The sunlit curving bay, the peaks
That rim the dimming shore—
To all that I have seen and loved,
Good-bye for evermore.

Quite ready, Death. How many you have called!
Above Fame's Book no longer I can pore
Or watch the ages' giants put to test—
Columbus and Magellan daring west,
Old Galileo's starry tour,
Or Darwin delving lore.
And now—to storied, gloried Earth
Good-bye for evermore!

END OF SECOND BOOKLET

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